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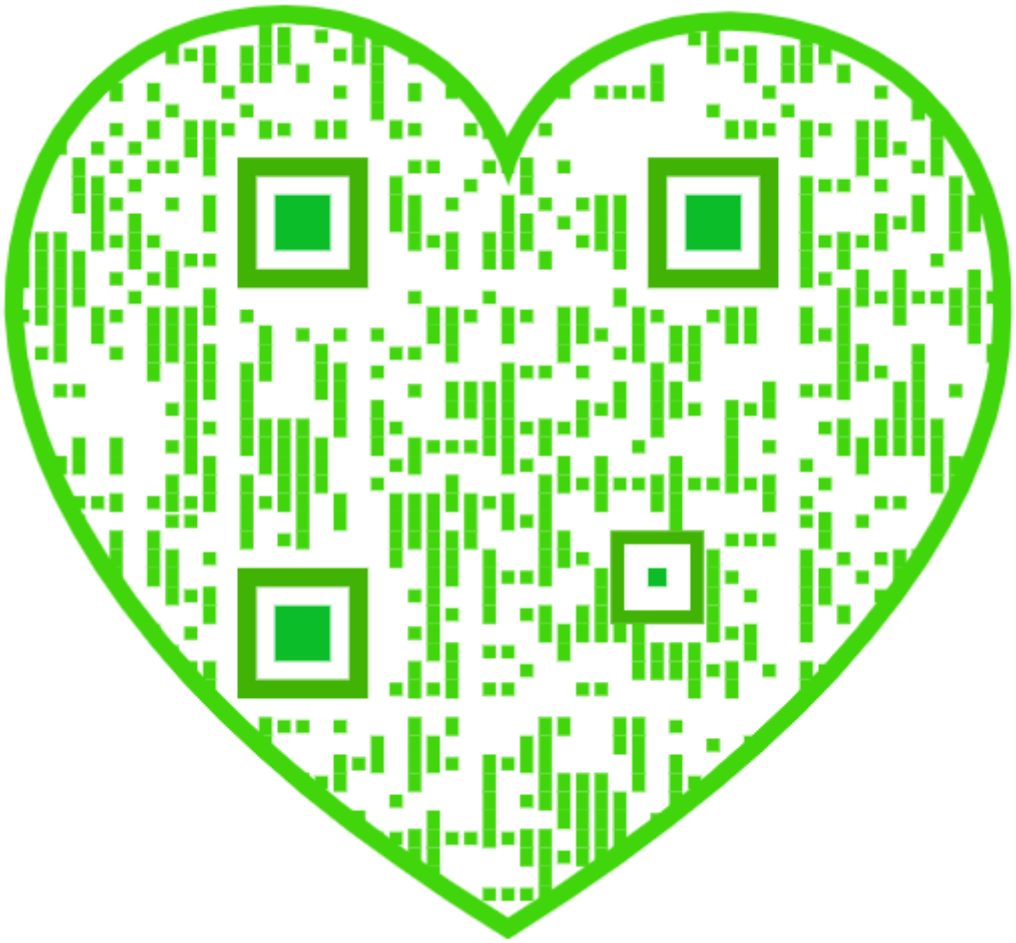
RENDERING IN PEN AND INK

AMERICAN SCHOOL of CORRESPONDENCE
CHICAGO ILLINOIS



RENDERING IN PEN AND INK

INSTRUCTION PAPER

PREPARED BY

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AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CORRESPONDENCE

CHICAGO ILLINOIS

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RENDERING IN PEN AND INK.

To render in pen and ink a large and important drawing is no small accomplishment. Usually years of experience are necessary before one can sucessfully undertake such drawings. Now and then a student is to be found having talent to the extent that the attainment of this skill seems a very easy matter, but in general this talent is comparatively rare. Ninety-five out of every hundred have a long task ahead before success is possible. This difficulty of attainment, however, makes the accomplishment all the more valuable. No one would expect to learn engraving on wood in a few brief lessons, and yet in pen and ink rendering difficulties are to be met not unlike those connected with engraving.

But there are many things concerning pen and ink work which can be readily learned; they are worth the trouble and the labor expended, and may prove useful. A consideration of these will, in any case, introduce the art and serve also as a good foundation for further pursuit of the subject if desired.

It is the purpose of this paper to seek the most modest of results, which may be set forth thus,—the rendering of a small building at a small scale in the very simplest manner, with few or no accessories.

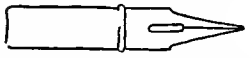
Kind of Drawing. There are three ways in which a sketch may be rendered, viz: with pen, pencil, or brush. Pen rendering will be considered first, and later additional notes will be made as to pencil work. Rendering with the brush is another line of work,

but much that may be advised in regard to pen rendering would also apply to brush work.

MATERIALS.

Pens. The tendency of beginners is to use too fine a pen. It must be remembered that many pen drawings are reproductions much smaller than the originals, and consequently the lines appear much finer than in the drawing itself. There are two pens that can be recommended, shown herewith. Years of experience prove them to be perfectly satisfactory. Occasionally a finer pen is needed, such as Gillott No. 303. The Esterbrook No. 14, a larger pen, is necessary in making the blacker portions of a drawing. The Gillott 404 is to be used for general work in the same drawing.

ESTERBROOK BANK PEN, NO. 14.



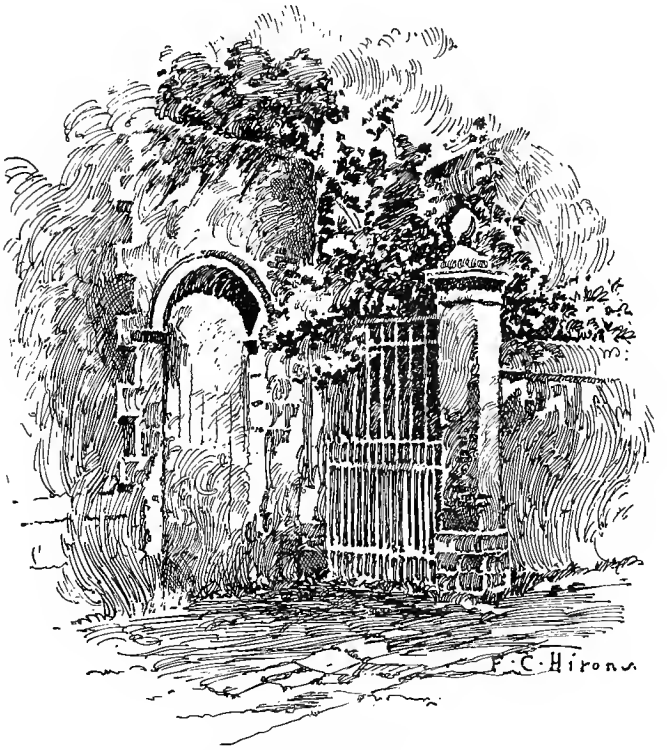
GILLOTT NO. 404.

Ink is not of as much importance as pens. The various prepared India inks put up in bottles are all that can be desired. They are more convenient than ink that must be rubbed up, and they have the advantage of always being properly black. Some ordinary writing inks serve the purpose very well if reproduction is not an object, but if reproduction is desired, India ink, being black, is preferred.

Paper. The very best surface is a hard Bristol board. The softer kinds of Bristol boards should be avoided, as they will not stand erasure. Most of the drawing papers do very well. Whatman's hot pressed paper is very satisfactory. An excellent drawing surface is obtained by mounting a smooth paper on cardboard, thus obtaining a level surface that will not spring up with each pressure of the pen. This is equivalent to a Bristol board. However, the size of Bristol board is limited and frequently drawings must be much larger, in which case the mounted paper is a necessity.

LINE WORK.

Quality of Line. Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of a good line, however insignificant it may seem. Care in each individual line is absolutely necessary for good work. A line



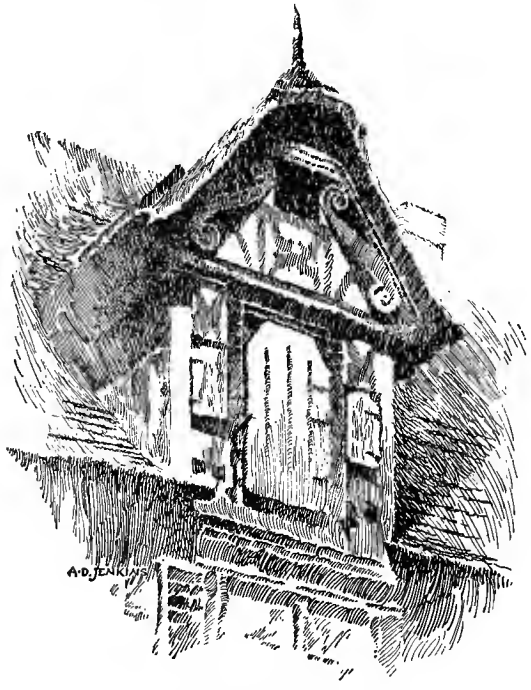
GOOD QUALITY OF LINE.

that is stiff and hard, feeble, scratchy or broken, will not do. Such work will ruin a drawing that in other respects may be excellent. The accompanying illustration by one of the students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is an example of excellent quality of line. Each line, even to the very smallest, has grace and beauty. By a very few, the ability to make such lines is speedily acquired—but by a few only—others may attain it by careful practice.

Every line of a drawing—the outline of the building and each line of the rendering, even to the very shortest must be done feelingly, gracefully, positively. Usually a slight curve is advisable and if long lines are used, a quaver or tremble adds much to the result. Each line of a shadow should have a slight pressure of the pen at the lower end. This produces a dark edge in the group of lines that

make the shadows, giving definiteness to the shadow and contrast to the white light below it.

Method. The combination of individual lines produces what we may term a method. The individual line may be good but the combining may be unfortunate. In making a wash drawing no thought is necessary concerning the direction of the wash, but in using lines at once the query arises as to what direction they



A DORMER, GERMANY.
EXCELLENT METHOD

shall take. A method is something one must grow into from a small, simple beginning. The accompanying illustration, the work of another Massachusetts Institute of Technology student, is an example of rare skill in method quickly acquired. There is an utter absence of anything rigid or mechanical in the whole. Observe how softly the edges of the drawing merge into the white of the paper. The vigor of the drawing is gathered in the dormer itself.

Vertical Lines. The simplest method is obtained by the use of the vertical line. Some drawings can be made entirely by this means. See Fig. 3, every line of which is vertical. This illustrates the value of a good individual line. It will be observed that although vertical, these lines are not severely straight and stiff, they tremble a little, or have a slight suggestion of a curve. In the shadow at the bottom of the drawing each line is emphasized at the top by a slight pressure, and made thin at the lower end in order to soften off the edges of the drawing as a whole.

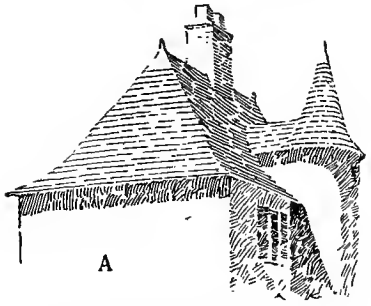
Fig. 3.
VERTICAL LINE METHOD.

Free Lines. Fig. 4 shows another method. The vertical line is discarded and the freest possible line is used. No one direction is followed, but the lines go in any or all directions. Which

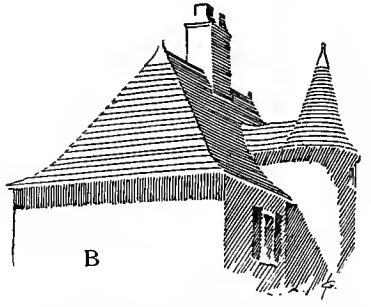
Fig. 4.
FREE LINE METHOD.

is the better method? The answer doubtless must be that the free method is the least conspicuous. It is better adapted for general use, in the showing of various surfaces and textures.

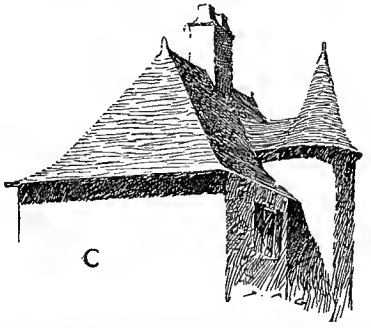
VARIOUS EXAMPLES OF BAD METHODS.



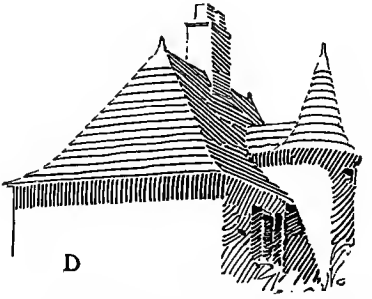
Short, broken line, resulting in a spotty effect; a fault common with beginners. The white spaces between the ends of the lines are very conspicuous.



The opposite in character to A. Long, unbroken lines, but so severely straight as to be hard and dry in general appearance.



Short lines, individually they may be very good, as they curve freely, but the combination is fussy and finnicky.



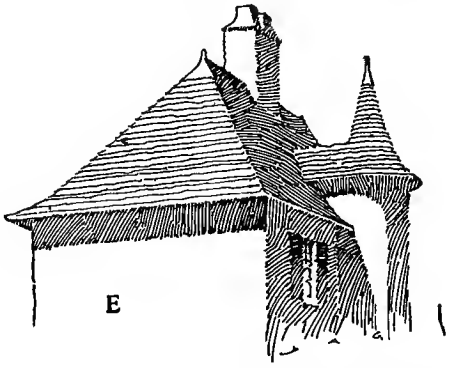
Direction of line not bad, but is rather too coarse to be agreeable. Wide spacing of lines on light portions add to the coarse result.

These illustrate four bad methods. A has the least merit, the others approach to a fair quality. In E an effort is made to avoid all the faults shown in the others—the short or severely straight line, the over labor combination of C, and the coarse line of D.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

Values. If several lines are drawn parallel and quite close together, but not touching, a gray, or half-tone value is the result.

Lines drawn so close together that the ink of one runs into that of the other, with little or no white space between, give a black



value. The white of the paper untouched by the pen gives a white value. Fig. 5 shows only two values—black and white; Fig. 6 also has two,—gray and white; Fig. 7 has the three,—black, gray and white. The first is harsh, the second is pale, and the third seems most satisfactory.

This is a safe rule to follow —get into every pen drawing, black, gray and white. Usually, in early attempts, there is a tendency to omit the black. Look for the place in the

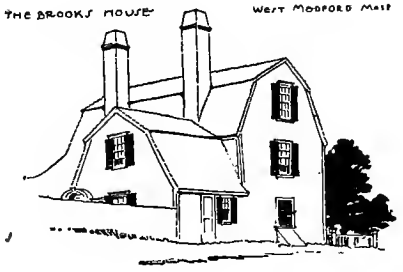


Fig. 5.
BLACK AND WHITE.

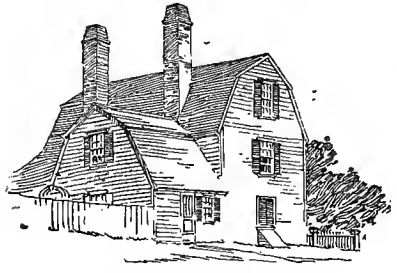


Fig. 6.
GRAY AND WHITE.

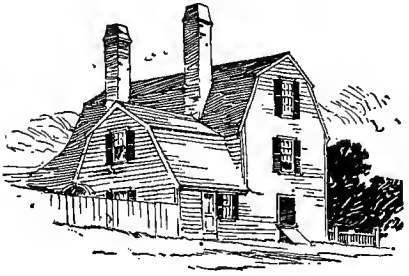


Fig. 7.
BLACK, GRAY AND WHITE.

drawing where you can locate this black; you are not likely to get too much of it. Let the half tone or gray be rather light, midway in strength between white and black. A heavy half tone is

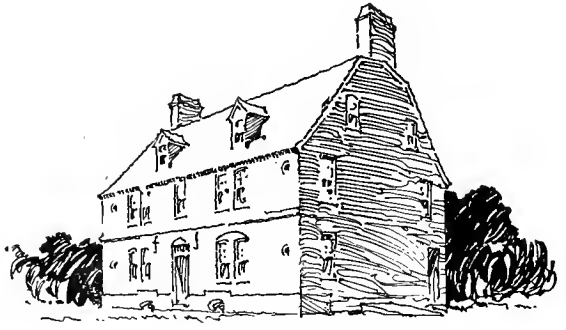


Fig. 8.
ONE SIDE IN SHADE.

a dangerous value. The black may often grade off into the gray, or there may be distinct fields or areas of each value.

Lighting. The first thing to consider in the rendering of an architectural subject is the choosing of the direction of light. Sometimes when the building is turned well to the front, showing

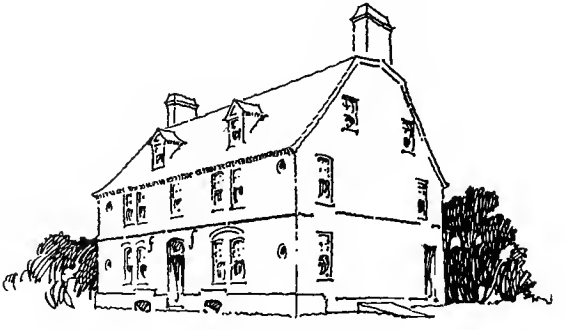


Fig. 9.
ALL IN LIGHT.

a sharp return of the end, it may be best to put that side in shade, Fig. 8, but it is not necessary. Values may be obtained by other means such as by shadows, or color of material. It is not wise to attempt a heavy rendering in pen work. Usually it is safer

to keep both sides of the building in light as shown in two of these sketches, Figs. 9 and 10.

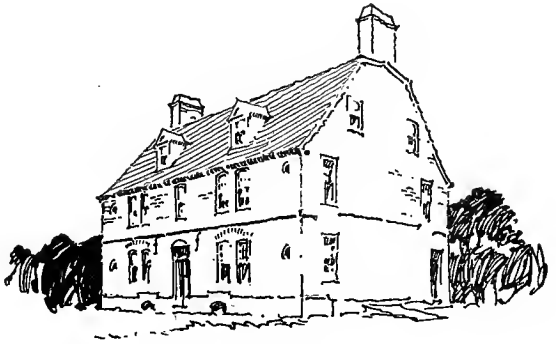


Fig. 10.
ALL IN LIGHT WITH HALF-TONE VALUE TO ROOF.

Color of Material. One of the means by which values may be introduced into a rendering, is by considering the color of the material of which the building is constructed.

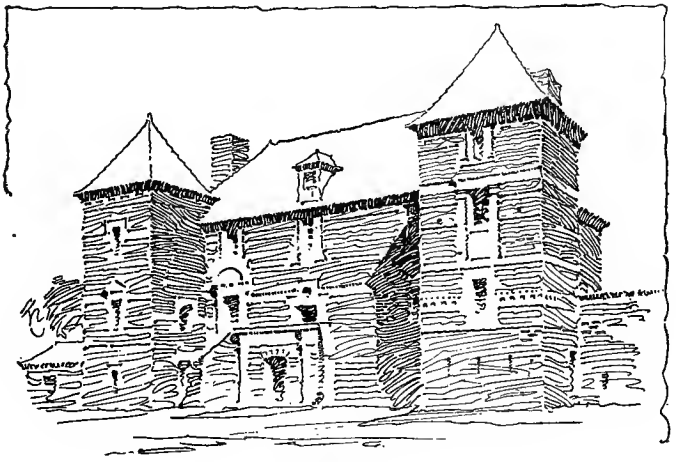


Fig. 11.
HALF-TONE WALLS.

In this example, Fig. 11, we may first use the brick walls as a place to locate a gray value. In the second example, Fig. 12, the roof is used for the same value. For the very dark or black value we must depend on the shadows. Neither one of these draw-

ings is wholly satisfactory. In the first, the roof, and in the other, the walls, seem too glaringly white. For that reason it is not always best to use the material color so broadly. To give color to

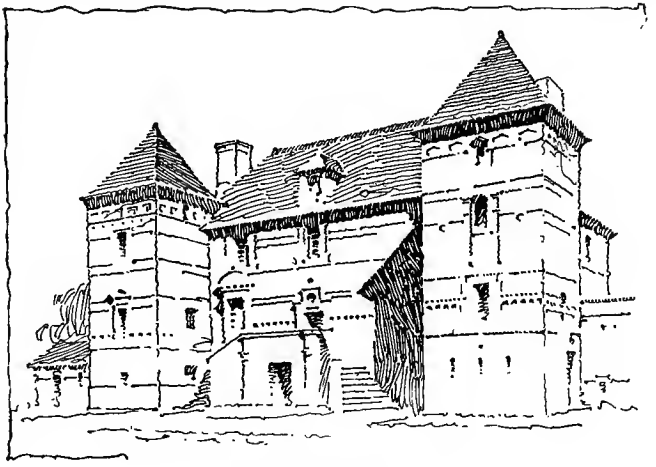


Fig. 12.
HALF-TONE ROOF.

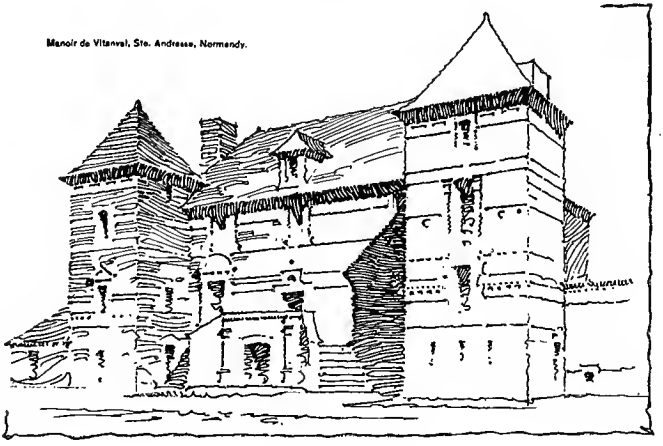


Fig. 13.
A COMPROMISE.

both walls and roof would destroy the white value, and the white value must not be lost. Fig. 13 shows an attempt at a compromise.

Shadows Only. The simplest means for obtaining values is

by the use of shadows. Sometimes the shadows alone will complete a drawing in a very satisfactory manner, as in Fig. 14. Some of the shadows may be made gray, and others black or nearly so, in order to get the needed variety in values.

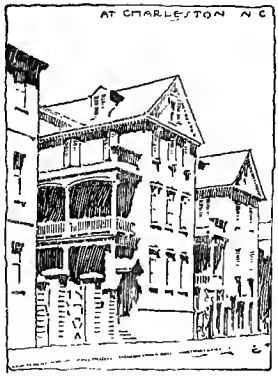


Fig. 14.
SHADOWS ONLY.

A building like that shown in Fig. 15, The Alden House, is not favorable to shadows only. It has no porch or other projection sufficiently large to cast a strong shadow. In such a case a little accessory helps one out of the difficulty, and a little rendering of the material gives needed half tone. Otherwise the drawing would be too white.

Principality or Accent. We now enter into a matter of composition. One simple rule will be given and there is none more useful. Let there be one place in the drawing where a strong accent of black shall exist. It may be one black, or it may be a group of them. This accent will be found in nearly every illustration in this paper. It is usually best to

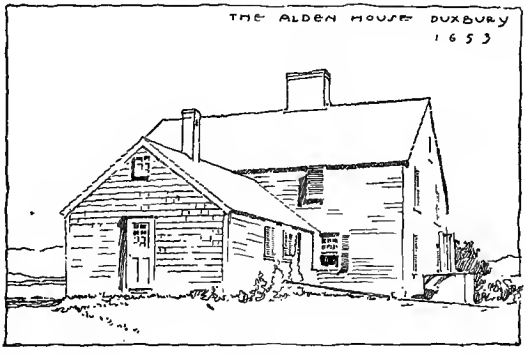


Fig. 15.

get the accent in the building itself, by the aid of some large shadow perhaps, but when there is no chance for this it may be necessary to get it in an accessory such as foliage. This is shown in Fig. 16, a drawing of a barn. In connection with this black accent let there be a large white area if possible. A princi-

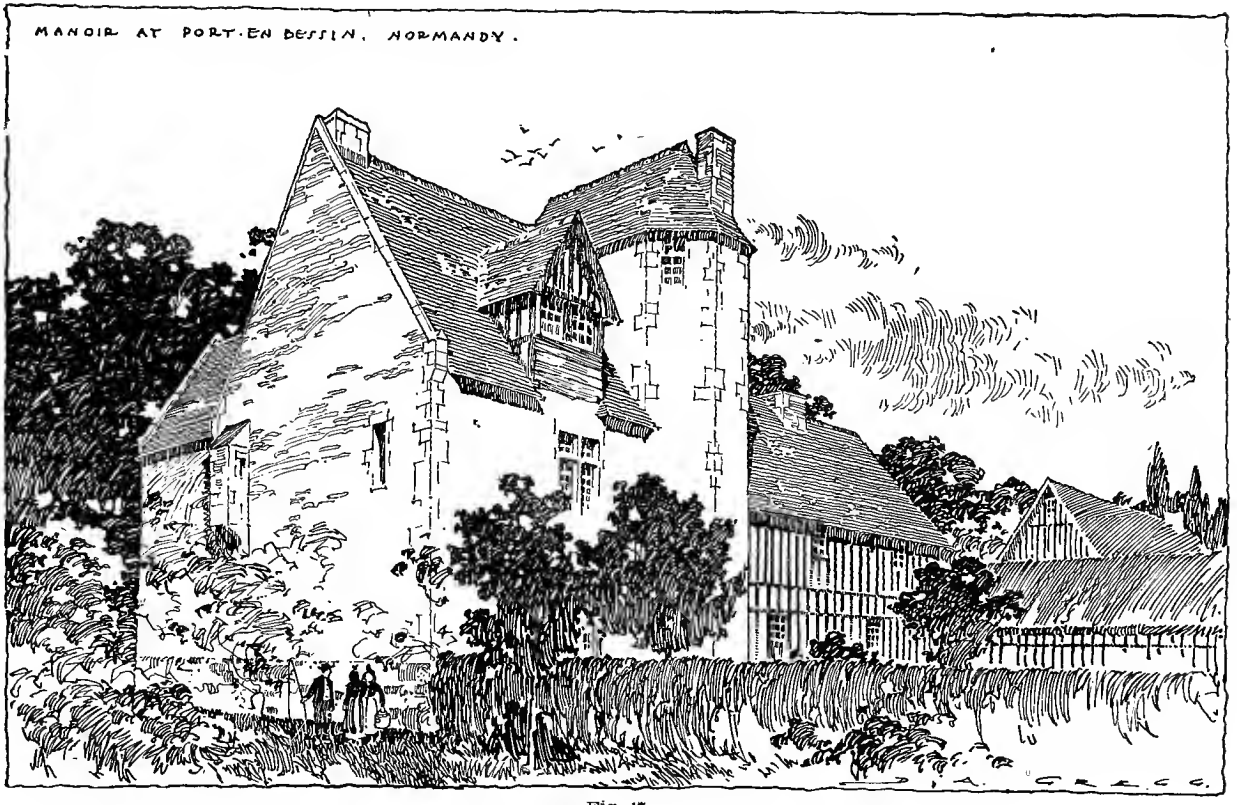


Fig. 17.

pal white, as well as a principal black is thus obtained. Most drawings permit the dark accent and the light area also.

Fig. 17 is rendered to a greater extent than should be attempted by the student in this course, but it may be helpful to call attention to some things in its composition.

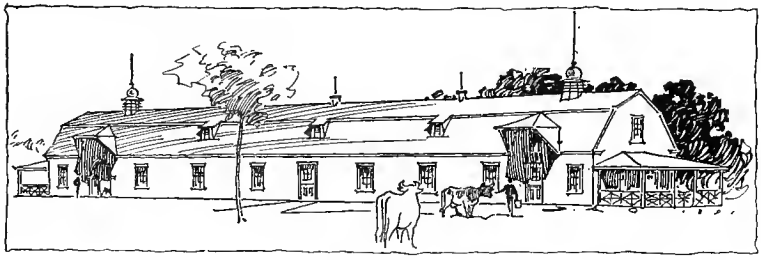


Fig. 16.

The location of the dark accent is apparent in the trees at the left. The other blacks, the trees in front of the building and those down at the extreme right, simply repeat in diminishing force and size, this first dark accent. The light area of the drawing is as distinctly shown as the dark accent; in fact this large light is the feature of this rendering. The light brick rendering of the gable is necessary to confine the light a little more surely to the important portion of the wall. Also, if this light rendering were omitted the building would appear unpleasantly white.

The half tone of the roof is necessary to give a soft contrast to the light wall surface. The sky has its use. Cover it up, and see how the whole subject slumps downward.

Last, but not least, observe that the corners of the drawing are kept free from rendering. This is usually safe. Let the rendering of every sort gather about the central object. The corners of a drawing may then be left to take care of themselves.

PENCIL WORK.

A pencil is a quicker medium for the rendering of a sketch than a pen. A pencil sketch may be made directly on a sheet of drawing paper, and completed on that same sheet. But it is neater to first draw the perspective on smooth white paper, then place Alba tracing paper over this outline, and trace and render. By this means all construction lines in the layout can be omitted,

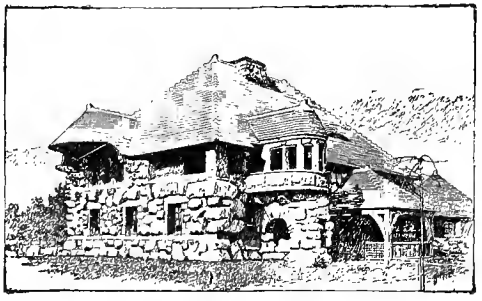
and the sunny edge of projections can be left out, thus adding greatly to the brightness of the drawing.

Use a soft pencil for rendering, a BB or softer. If the drawing is to be much handled, spray it with fixatif. Trim the sketch, lightly gum the corners, and lay on white card with good margin.

SUMMARY.

The following summary of advice for the rendering of work generally, with pen or pencil may be found helpful.

1. Consider the direction of the light.
2. Discover in the outline before you. the opportunity for a leading dark accent.
3. Look out also for the location of a large light area.
4. Put in shadows.
5. Get at least three distinct values; black, gray and white.
6. Consider the color of roof or the wall, and if necessary use one of them or portions of each for a gray value.
7. Use a very free method.
8. Keep rendering out of the corners of the drawing.



EXAMINATION PLATES.

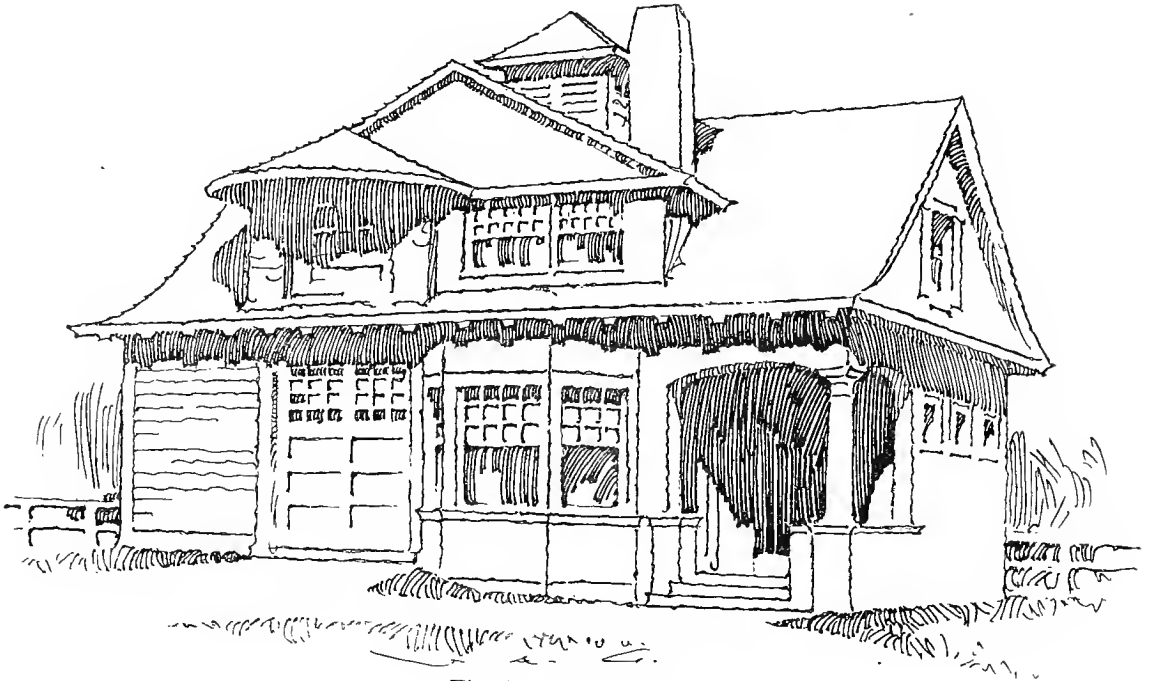


Fig A. (For Plate I.)

FINISHED DRAWING.

EXAMINATION PLATES.

Before attempting to render the drawings in ink, the student is advised to practice both with pencil and ink, using the practice plates provided for the purpose.

PLATE I.

In order to get quickly into the practice, the student will be asked to make a copy of this rendering, Fig. A. Do not try to copy too exactly, but use the same freedom.

Observe that the dark accent is obtained by the large shadow and the end of the long shadow just over it. The dark rendering in the window is brought into the group also.

Having thus formed the accent, it is best that the shadow under the hood in the roof should be made rather light, lest it come into competition with the porch shadow. If the student prefers he may make it a trifle darker than here shown.

A little clapboard rendering is put in on the left, to make still more evident the large light, which occurs mainly on the roof but at the same time takes in other white spaces at that end of the drawing.

PLATE II.

This subject introduces a roof rendering, also a simple treatment of windows and blinds. Here the roof serves as a half-tone value. The shadow of the eaves and some of the blinds are the black values. To get the dark accent, the nearest blinds and the near portion of the shadow on the eaves are made very dark.

The shadow under the porch shows how safely much of the detail of the door itself may be omitted and not be missed. A broad treatment is better than a fussy one. Observe that the roof lines are made as free as possible, avoiding a straight, wiry line.

After copying this plate original work may be attempted.

PLATES III AND IV.

Make the shadows only for the first rendering, Plate III, just as shown in this value scheme, Fig. C. Then make a second drawing of the same, Plate IV, and give a half tone to the front area of the roof, and to the end of the roof a darker value, as shown in suggestion in upper corner. Finally on this second

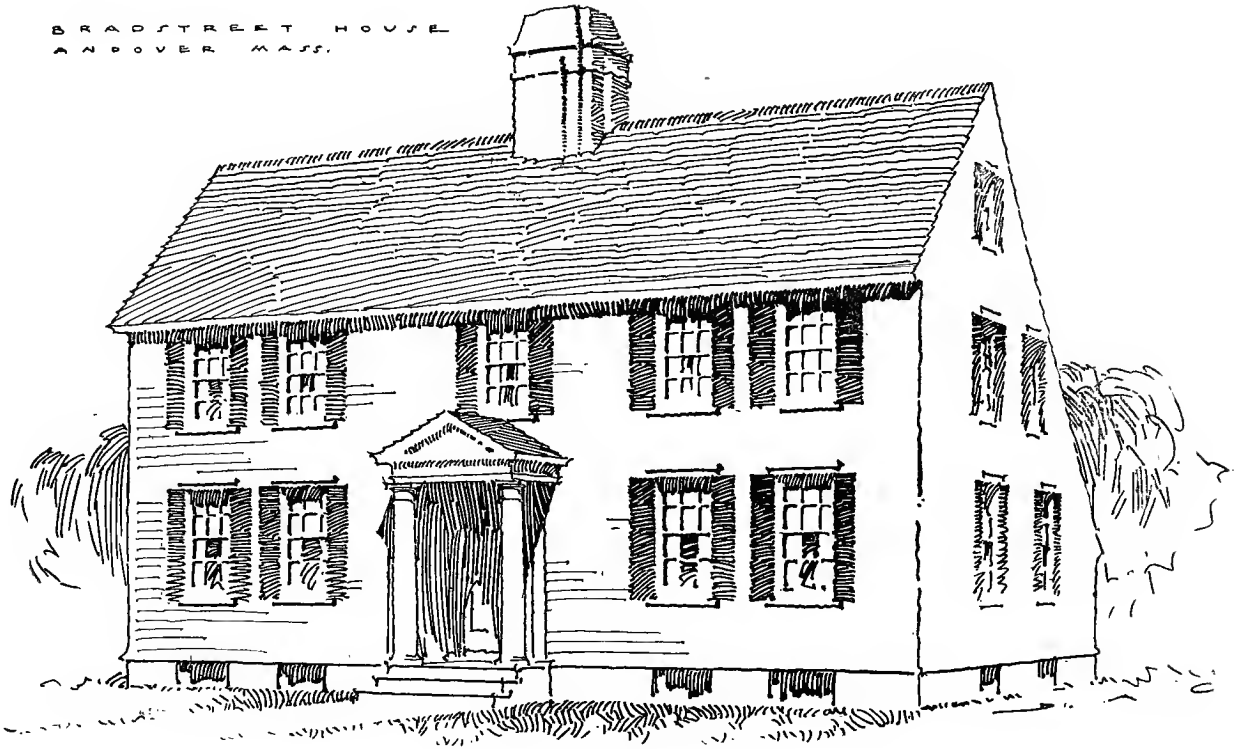


Fig. B. (For Plate II.)

drawing, put a small amount of rendering on the wall at the distant right, in the same manner as on Plate II. This will give a large white light on the walls nearest the observer. The long shadows under the eaves should be darkest at the corner nearest the observer and gradually lighten up as it approaches either end.

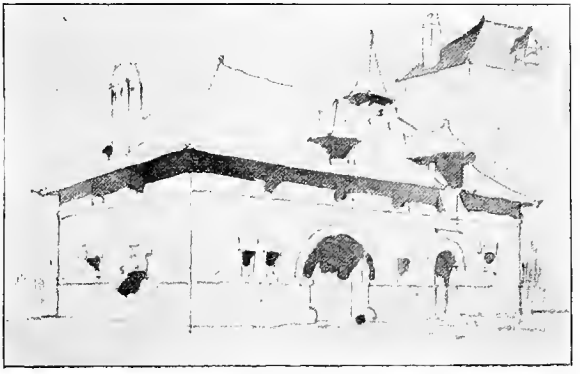


Fig. C. (For Plates III and IV.)

PLATE V.

Put in the shadows first. Get the nearest shadows very dark; then give a half-tone rendering to the whole of the brick-wall surface. Do not ink in the lines at the edges of the brick walls. Let

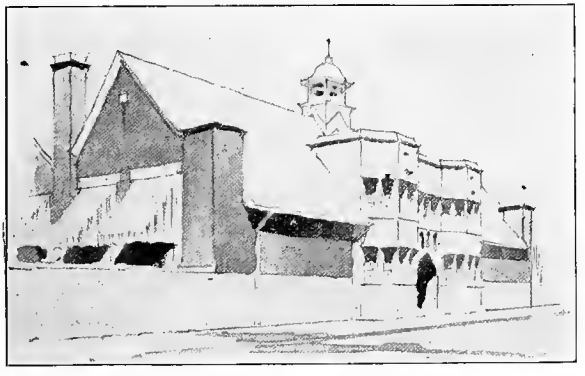


Fig. D. (For Plate V.)

your rendering make the edge as shown in Fig. 18. An outline in such a place produces a mechanical looking rendering, as is seen in the illustration. Outlining is absolutely necessary where there

is no rendering, but in connection with it, omit the outline, if possible.

PLATE VI.

The doorway shadow selects for itself the honor of being the leading accent; the shadows at left and right simply repeat it in a small way. The roof affords an opportunity for half-tone. The

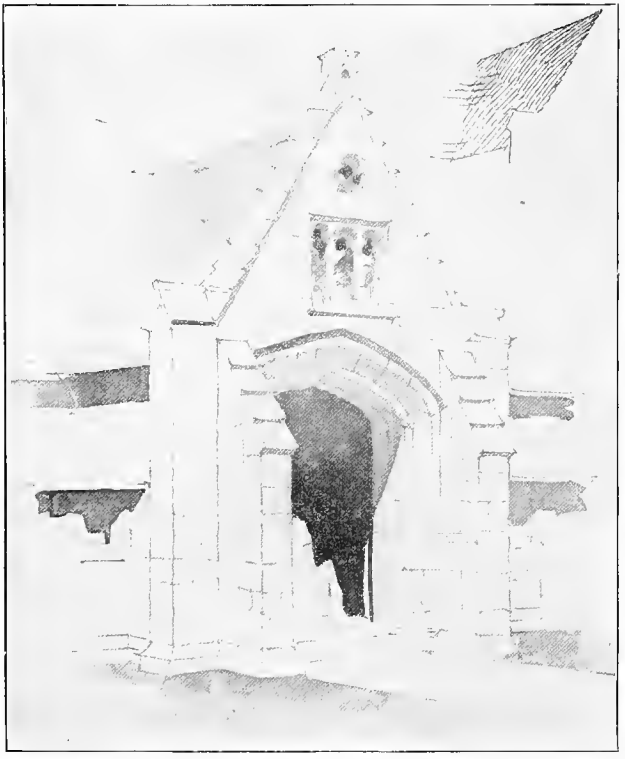


Fig. E. (For Plate VI.)

grass, which may be rendered as illustrated in the two preceding examples, gives also an additional half-tone value. To retain or produce a large light area, the stone jointing should be omitted on the upper portion of the wall, as indicated in the scheme. The roof may be rendered in a free line method, as shown in the sketch. With a good quality of line, and a free, vigorous method, this drawing will be a brilliant one, as its composition of values is favorable.

This ends the practice. Only a beginning has been made in the work—a foundation laid, but it is a safe one. What has been

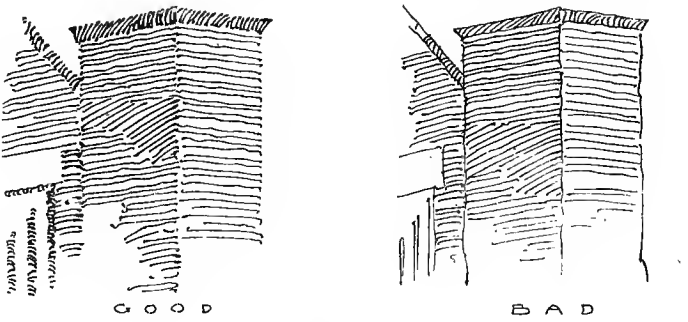
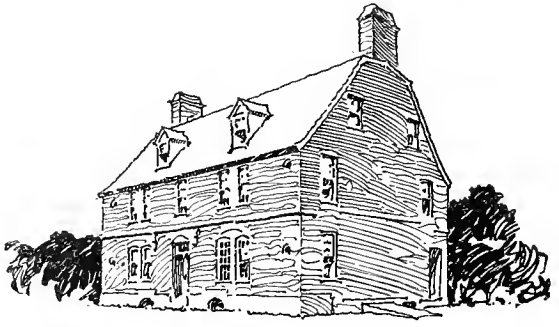


Fig. 18.

taught will be a help to a further pursuit of the subject should the student feel that he has developed sufficient talent to encourage further study.



Suggestion for treatment of house showing roof in light with half-tone value to walls.

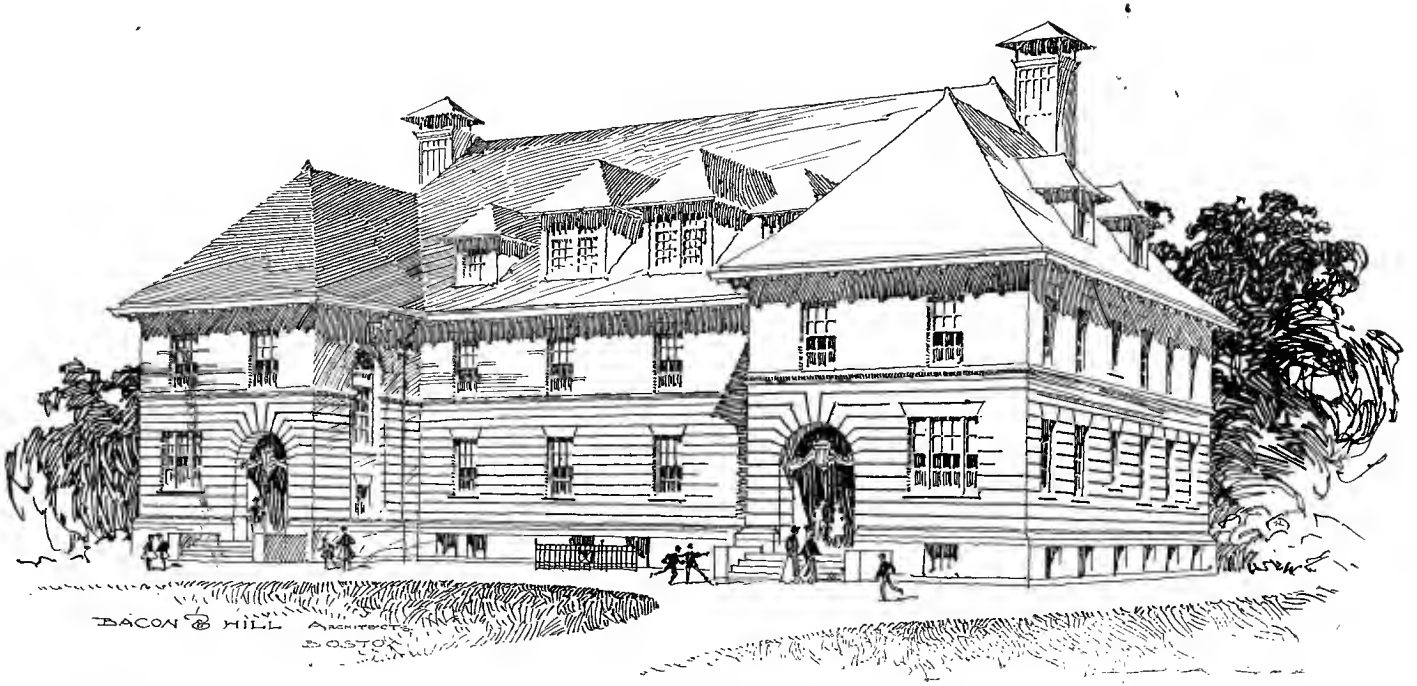


Fig. F. (For Plate VII.)

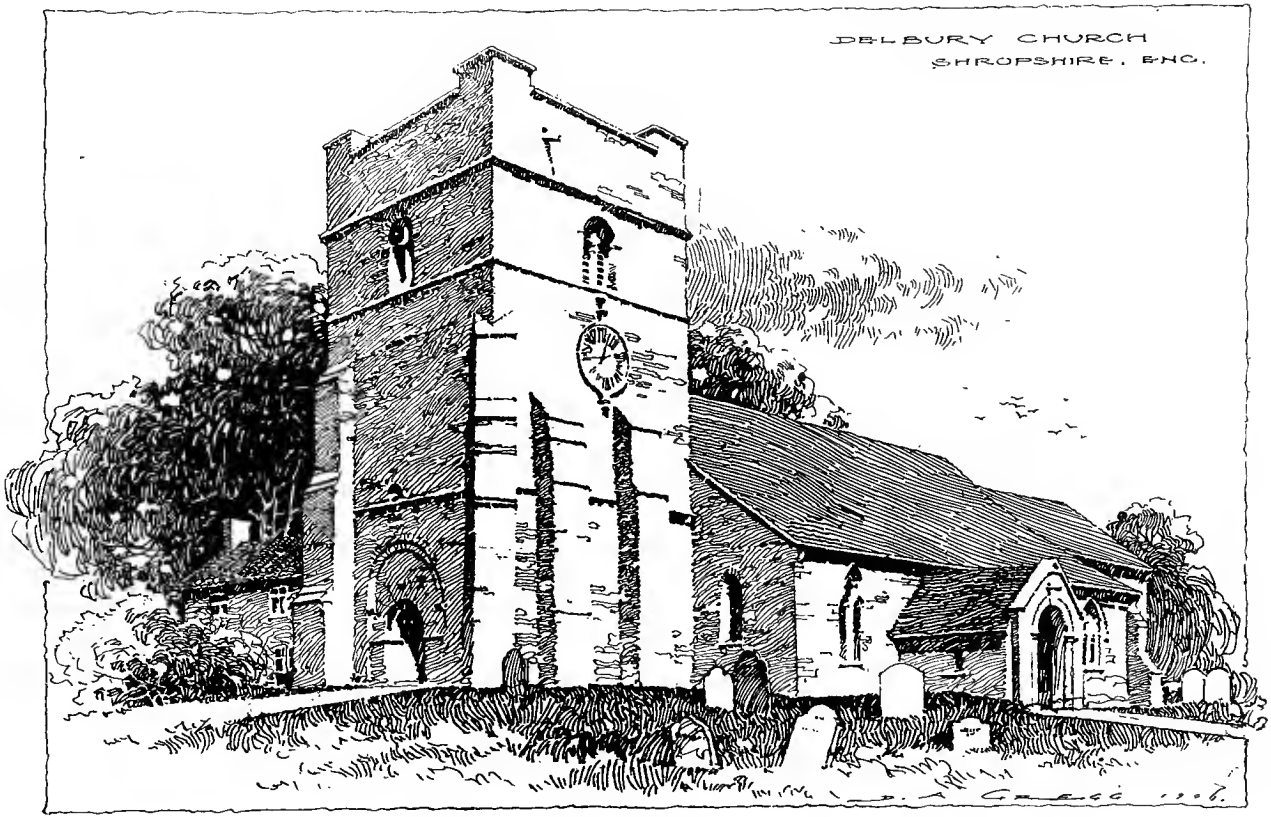


Fig. G. (For Plate VIII.)

Fig. H. (For Plate IX.)

Copy of a drawing by Herbert Railton, an illustration in the English Illustrated Magazine in an article entitled "Coaching Days and Coaching Ways," Macmillan & Co., Publishers, by permission. This copy made by J. A. Kane, Pen and Ink Class, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, D. A. Gregg, Teacher.

OPTIONAL PLATES

For further help to the student the excellent examples of rendering shown in Figs. F, G, and H are furnished. These are not required in the examination, but the accompanying outlines may be carefully rendered and sent to the School for criticism.

PLATE VII*

The finished drawing for this plate is shown in Fig. F. As to its composition, a scheme is here used that is very frequently possible and advisable, i. e., the making of a large light effect on the near portion of the building—not a small one, but one of good area. The color value of the brick wall and of the roof is ignored in order to get this large light. It is obtained by simply rendering thoughtfully around it.

Another item in the composition is the leading dark value, in the tree, repeated in less intensity in the doorways, windows, shadows, etc. Note also that the work is rounded up agreeably, just enough to balance the values.

As to technique, strive for freedom in direction and to avoid a hard liney result. Wherever possible the sunny edges are not drawn in by a line, the rendering itself producing sufficient definition. Again, note the distinct values, black, gray and white.

PLATE VIII*

The finished drawing for this plate is shown in Fig. G. As ever recommended, a free flowing line and method are used in every part of the drawing. On sunny edges (see buttresses) the line is omitted entirely. As to difference in values, the black, gray and white are distinctly marked.

In composition, the large black of the tree is the leading accent, and its black is repeated in small areas in various parts of the work. The subject affords as well a large leading light on the side of the tower, repeated also. Again (and this is very important), the corners of the drawing are left untouched, which gives a quiet grouping of all the values.

*Optional

PLATE IX*

The finished drawing for this plate is shown in Fig. H. Probably no draughtsman living can surpass Robert Railton in brilliant technique, the free use of line, and ingenious method. His work is especially adapted to architectural illustration.

It will repay good effort to copy this with care. This copy retains most commendably the spirit of the original. Observe the absence of purely straight lines, and the great freedom used in all outlines.

*Optional

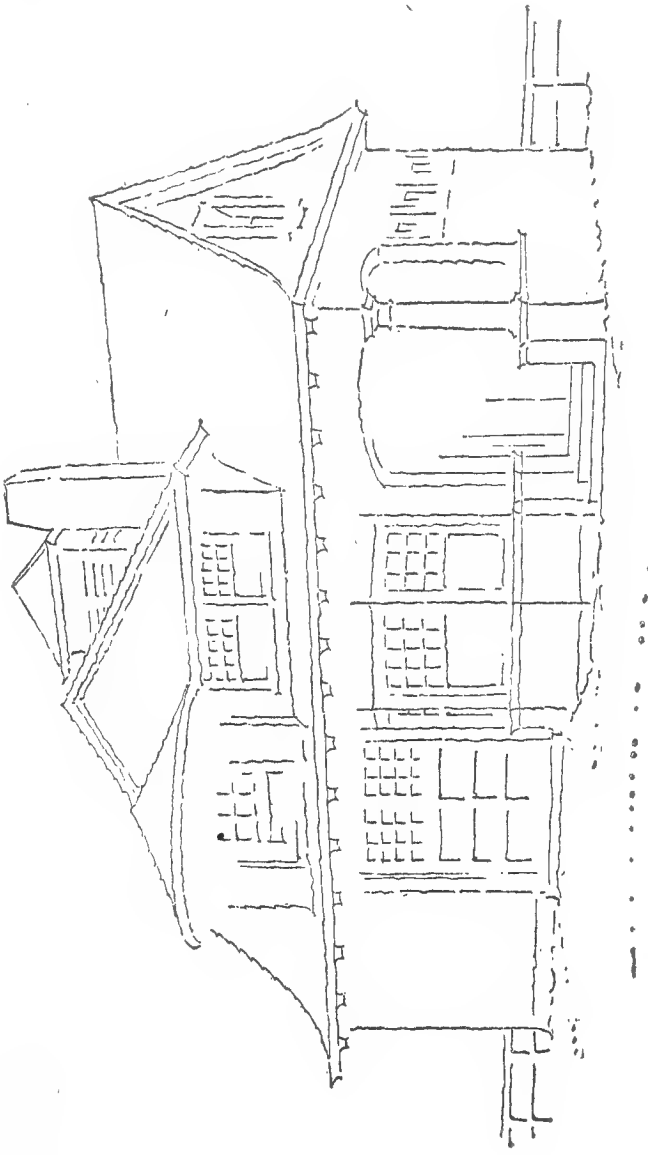
EXAMINATION PLATES.

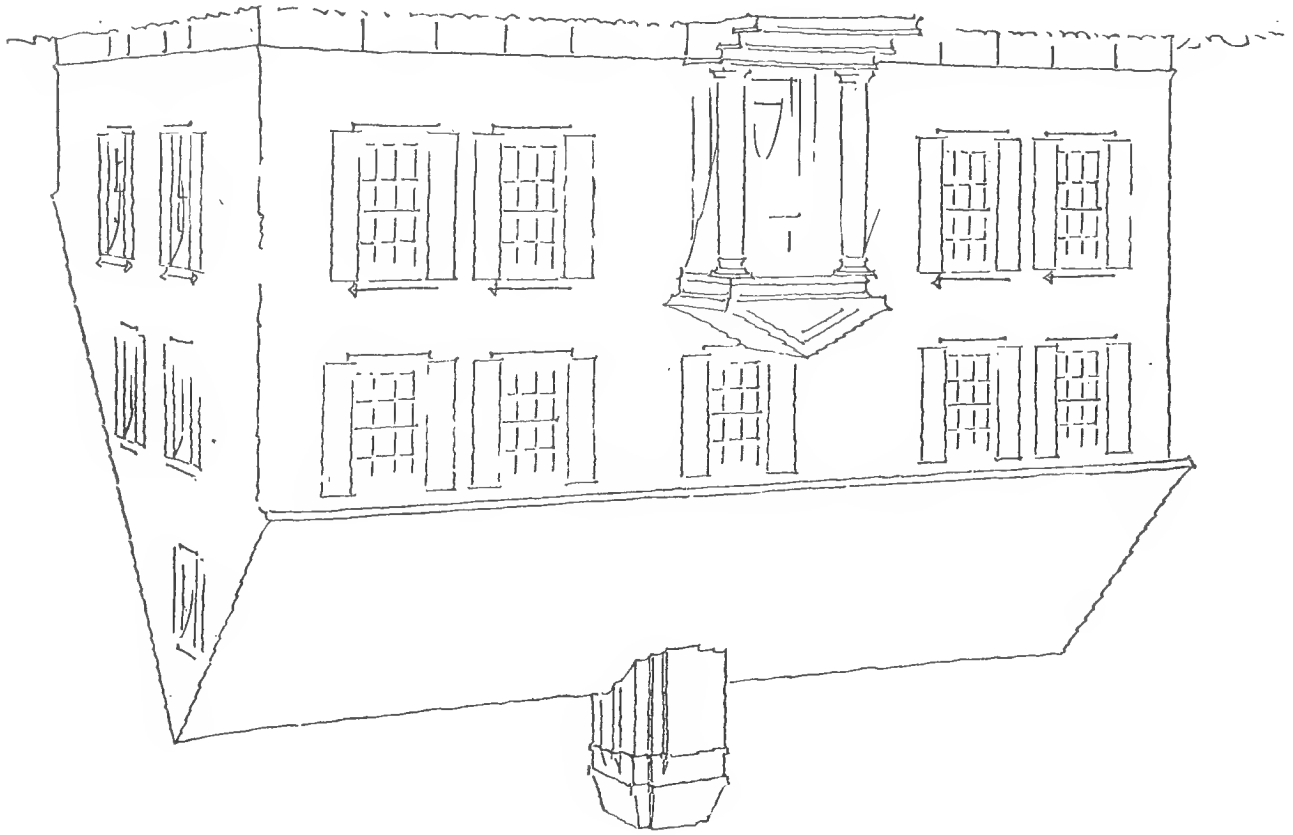
With this Instruction Paper are sent three sets of outline plates; one set for practice with pencil, one set for practice with ink and the third set (on better paper) to be rendered in ink and sent to the School for correction and criticism. The practice work need not be sent to the School.

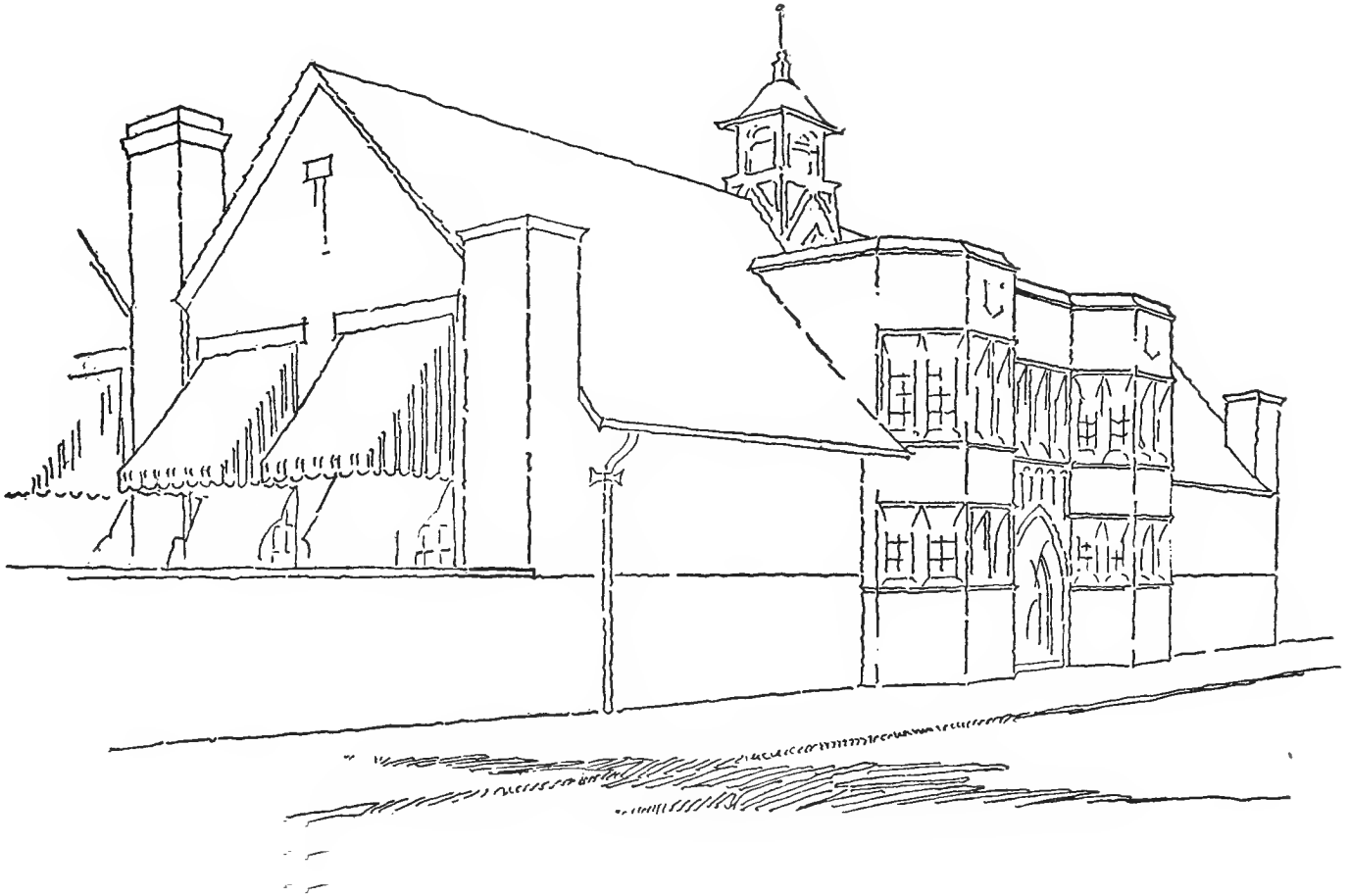
Should the ink not flow well, rub the whole plate lightly with a soft eraser, or rub over it a little powdered chalk. Before beginning to render the drawing, dust off any loose chalk remaining on the paper.

Plates I to VI inclusive constitute the examination for this instruction paper. The student's name should be lettered in the lower right-hand corner in a manner similar to that shown in the illustrations of the Instruction Paper.

Plates VII, VIII and IX are not required but may be rendered and sent to the School for criticism if desired.







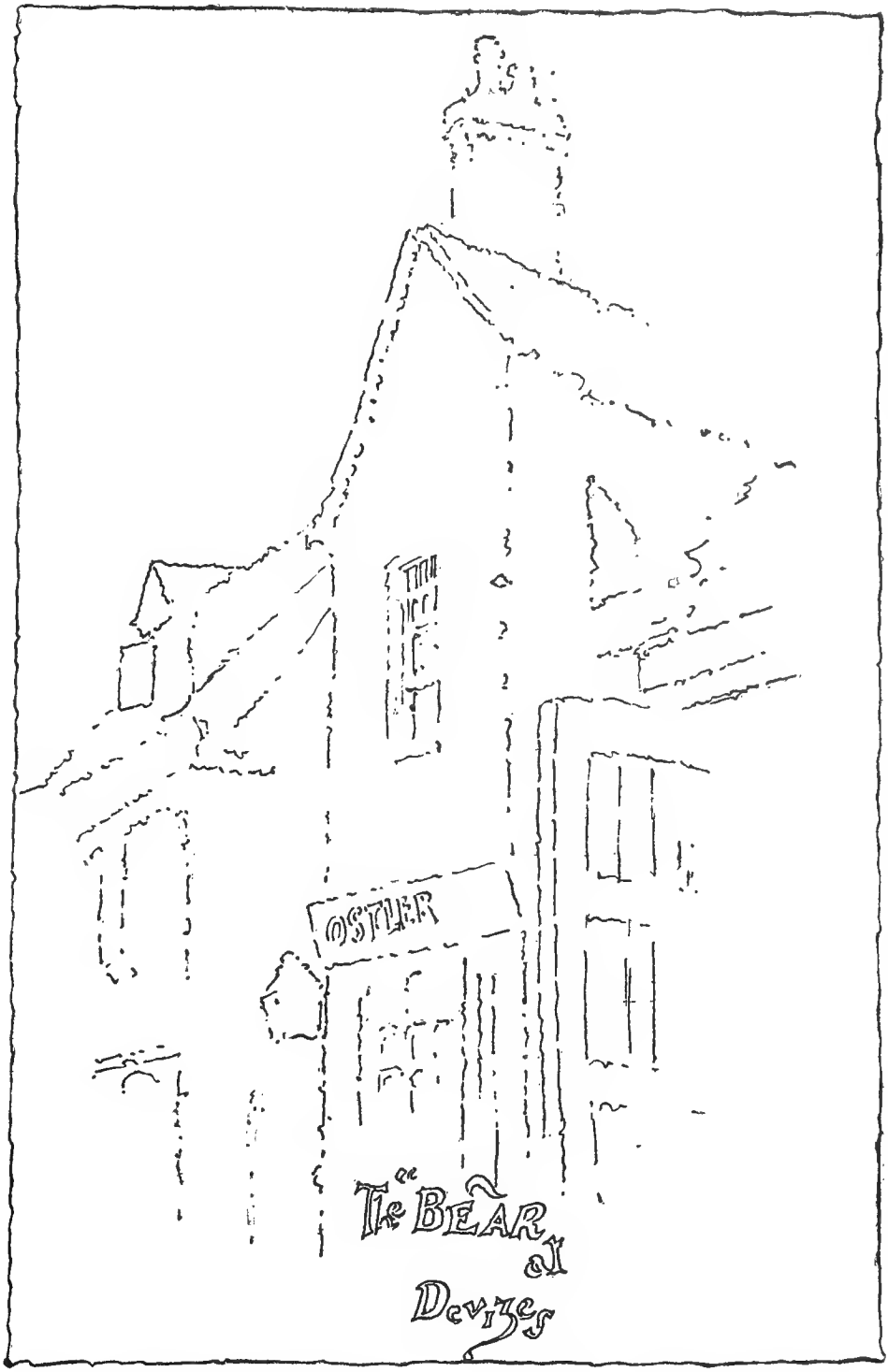


Plate 9.